The Killing of Kamsa #2

Scene One - Mathura

(Kamsa is accompanying his sister and Vasudeva to their new home on their wedding day amidst crowds, fanfare, etc..)

Citizen 1: Here comes Kamsa driving the chariot of his sister ad her husband Vasudeva!

Citizen 2: Look how beautiful the bride is!!

Citizen 3: How noble Vasudeva looks with his new bride!

Citizen 4: Much happiness to you both!!

Citizen 5: May good fortune smile upon you!!

Voice: Kamsa!
(Kamsa looks about for the voice, fearfully)
Kamsa, you are such a fool! You are happily driving the chariot of your sister and your new brother-in-law, but you do not know that the eighth child of this sister will be the death of you!!!
(All are transfixed. Suddenly, Kamsa grabs Devaki.)

Kamsa: No!!!

Voice: The death of you!!

Kamsa: No!!!

Vasudeva: The death of you!!

Kamsa: NO, (drawing his sword) it shall not be!!
(Kamsa grabs Devaki by the hair.)

Vasudeva: Wait! My dear brother-in-law, the most famous prince of the Bhoja Dynasty, stay your hand! How can you be so overcome with fear that you would kill a woman, and your own sister, at that, even on the auspicious occasion of her marriage!??

Kamsa: Leave off! (He pushes Vasudeva away.)

Vasudeva: Are you so afraid of death? Death is already with you from birth. From the day you were born, you began to die. Final death is inevitable. It may come today or in a hundred years, but no one can avoid it. Why then should you be so afraid of death?

Kamsa: I am not afraid of anything but I will do as I please! Get away from me, Vasudeva!

Vasudeva: Think of your reputation. How will it look if you allow your passions to seduce you into committing this abominable act? Think about how your reputation will suffer.

Kamsa: (hesitates, but still enraged) Arrrrrgggh!!

Vasudeva: Dear brother-in-law, consider this - you are in no immediate danger from Devaki. You are expecting some danger in the future because you heard a prophetic voice from he sky. The danger is not from your sister, but from the sons of your sister. And they are not even present! And who knows, there may or may not be any sons in the future. Look, you are safe for the present. Devaki presents no threat to you, and if there are sons born to us, I swear I will present them to you, personally, to do with as you wish!

Kamsa: (lowering his sword and releasing Devaki) Very well, Vasudeva, I will accept your proposal. You are famous for keeping your word and I will hold you to it. We will forget about this for the moment, but if you try to cross me, you will both feel the full force of my wrath! I'll not be put off on this.

Vasudeva: You have decided wisely, O great and most valorous of the Bhojas. All glories to you!

(They proceed, Kamsa smiles and waves. The onlookers become joyful again.)

Narrator: And so the time passed for Devaki and Vasudeva in freedom and comfort until the birth of their first child. Vasudeva insisted, over Devaki's tears, that he take the child to Kamsa as he had promised on that terrible day. With a heavy heart, he set out for the court of Kamsa.

Scene Two - Kamsa's Court

(Kamsa sits with an advisor, there is rich music, maybe a dancing girl.)

Advisor: I must tell you, Kamsa, that I think that you have been far too

liberal with them. They pose an imminent threat to your life. Not now, perhaps, but in the future □

Kamsa: I don't want to hear about it any more, not know.

Advisor: Suppose they should escape your surveillance suddenly and disappear to hatch their plot in secret and strike in the dark!?

Kamsa: Ha! Plot in secret? You don't know Vasudeva, the son of Surasena! Devaki, do you see this gold? Vasudeva's word is as good as this gold. He will save me the trouble □

Guard: (enters) Sire, Vasudeva seeks an audience with you. Should I □?

Kamsa: (looks smugly at advisor, dismisses musicians and dancers) Send him in.

Vasudeva: (entering with his newborn son) Great Kamsa, Devaki has borne me a son and, as I promised, I have brought him to you to do with as you see fit.

Kamsa: (taking baby) I am pleased that you have been good to your word, Vasudeva. However, I don't see what danger this child holds for me. I see no reason to harm this child unnecessarily. The Voice said that the eighth child would pose a threat to me. Here, you may take this child back and go home.

Vasudeva: (stunned) I don't □ I □ I can't believe □

Kamsa: Really. Here, take him back.
(Kamsa hands Vasudeva the baby.)

Vasudeva: Oh, thank you , Great Lord! Dear brother-in-law, you have acted very wisely and generously! Thank you!
(Vasudeva leaves with his son.)

Kamsa: He is a fool, but an honorable fool. I pity him.

Advisor: So, let us take the child away! Suppose the prophesy was misleading in order to put you off guard □ Perhaps these are the Killer's cohorts taking birth □ One day they will help him to destroy you. I suspect that you are fool in this matter!

Kamsa: Enough! I know what I am doing. I have nothing to fear from this child. When the eighth child is born, Vasudeva will bring him here and I will dispose of him. Am I not on of the most powerful War Princes in the world?? I can kill a baby, but why should I do it unnecessarily?

(Narada Muni enters.)

Narada: Kamsa, you are indeed a fool if you o not see the significance of the events going on around you. Are you aware that Nanda Maharaj and all the residents of Vrndavana have been preparing for some time for the appearance of Lord Visnu?

Kamsa: Visnu?

Narada: In person, yes. In the flesh. Furthermore, your father-in-law, King Surasena, his son, Vasudeva, and all their relatives, the Yadu dynasty, have been awaiting Vasudevaisnu's appearance in their own family. Many of the demigods have already taken birth in these families and also □

Kamsa: Demigods!!

Narada: The demigods are already preparing the way. Be wary of friends and well-wishers from the Yadu dynasty.

Kamsa: Visnu?

Narrator: Yes, Kalenemi.

Kamsa: What??

Narrator: That was your name in a previous birth. You were a foe of Visnu and he vanquished you. Now, you have returned □ and now He is returning □

Kamsa: Returning!? When? Where?

(Narada Muni leaves.) Narada?

Advisor: Demigods!

Kamsa: Visnu!

Advisor: I told you not to be so easy! I knew that it was not a good idea to let them keep heir child. Now, the demigods are in on it!

Kamsa: (suddenly angry) Be quiet! Let me think. Vasudeva, He could be anywhere, anyone of them. No, I won't be trapped like this!

Advisor: Demigods!

Kamsa: Shut up! We've beaten the demigods before. I have to safeguard my life, by any means. (calls) Guard! Go after Vasudeva, arrest him and the child and Devaki. Secure them in my prison.

(Guard leaves) I will also arrest my father, Krsnaing Ugrasena - he would be sure to protest. (to Advisor) See that it is done. And with my father out of the way, I shall be the King of the Yadu and the Bhoja and Andraka dynasties. You will also see to it that Vasudeva's father, Surasena, is imprisoned. I shall proclaim my rulership over his lands as well. Then, there will be none who dares to oppose me and we may deal with this menace.

(Advisor leaves.)

I cannot bring myself to kill my sister. I cannot bring myself to kill my dear sister. I cannot risk the damage of my reputation, but her children will never see the light of day. I shall personally see to it that none of them represent a threat to me.

(Kamsa exits.)

Scene Three - Kamsa's Prison

(Vasudeva and Devaki are in chains.)

Devaki: But why? Why has he suddenly changed his mind? He said that this child proved no threat to him Oh, my poor baby!

Vasudeva: I could hardly believe it when he handed me back our son. With someone like Kamsa, you can never tell. His mind is as changeable as the wind - one moment it's going in one direction, the next moment another.

Devaki: But, what could have changed his mind? You did all that he asked.

Vasudeva: I don't know, Devaki. I do know that he is uncontrolled and irresponsible and a man who allows his senses to motivate him can never be trusted.

Devaki: Oh Vasudeva, what will we do?

Vasudeva: What can we do? We must place our trust in Lord Visnu. He knows what is in our hearts and how we are trying to do His will. He will certainly protect us, even here in Kamsa's foul dungeon. The Lord's will cannot be averted. (Baby cries.)

Vasudeva: Hush. Hush, little one.

Devaki: The poor child!

Vasudeva: My dear wife, let us call upon Lord Visnu and seek his protection.

Both: Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevayah
(Kamsa enters.)

Kamsa: Ahh, how touching! But, none of your tricks or pitiful looks will stay my hand this time. I'll have that child!

Devaki: NO!!! (Kamsa picks up child.)

Vasudeva: Please, sir – dear brother-in-law –

Kamsa: No more of your speeches, Vasudeva; I don't trust you.

Vasudeva: (grabs child) I cannot allow you to be so cruel!

Kamsa: Silence! You harbor my destroyer, whose progeny are to conspire to cause my downfall. (to Devaki) Be grateful that I am too bound by filial ties to take your life as well, O sister-of-mine. You will live, but your children will not! Don't think that our father, Ugrasena, will come to your aid; I have taken care of him! And Surasena, as well. It is at my whim that you live at all!
(Kamsa grabs child and leaves.)

Vasudeva: Kamsa!

Devaki: You villian!! You monster!!
(Devaki cries in Vasudeva's arms.)

Narrator: And so, the cruel Kamsa, driven by his fears, killed the five succeeding infants born to Vasudeva and Devaki. In this way, he sought

to avoid the certain death that was coming to him. The more he murdered, the more he feared. He allied himself with demoniac kings and strengthened his political power until Kamsa's notoriety was world-wide.

Devaki's seventh pregnancy was thought to be a miscarriage but, in reality, the Lord's plenary expansion, Ananta-Sesa, was transferred for his protection, to the womb of Rohini, a wife of Vasudeva who was living in exile in Vrndavana. The child born to Rohini was named Balarama.
Soon, the fearful eighth child of Devaki would be born.

Vasudeva: My dear wife, how beautiful and lustrous you appear, even in this grim prison. You are shining with transcendental light. Surely, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Himself, is within you.

Devaki: And surely Kamsa has seen it as well and guessed what it means. Oh Vasudeva, I am so full of joy, yet ravaged by dread of Kamsa. He has killed six of our children; how will this One survive?

Vasudeva: I cannot say, but we must put our trust in Lord Visnu. He has preserved us here for His purposes and His plan will not be prevented. He has given □

Devaki: (crying out) Oh, ahhh! It has come time. Ohh!

Voice: Devaki, within your womb is the Supreme Personality of Godhead with all His expansions, You need not be afraid of Kamsa. Your son, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, is appearing not only to diminish the burden of the world, but specifically for the protection of the pious Yadu dynasty. And that includes you, Vasudeva, so do not be afraid. Do not be afraid.
(Strong music, a large Visnu form may be projected.)

Vasudeva: My dear Lord, I understand Who You are. I understand that You have appeared before me in Your eternal form to allay my fear of Kamsa. I know that You are the Supreme Controller, the Supreme Great, and yet You have appeared in my home □ I know that the purpose of Your appearance is to kill the demoniac rulers of the world along with Kamsa and his followers.

Devaki: But, my Lord, knowing that You are to appear to slay him, he has already killed all your preceding brothers. Now he awaits the news of Your birth to kill You, too. Please, therefore

disguise Your appearance from him.

Visnu: My dear Mother, your heart is always pure and you are always thinking of Me within your heart. Once, many lifetimes ago, I offered you anything you desired and you wished to have Me as your son. My dear parents, you have been my mother and father for millenium after millenium. You have reared Me many times as your child with great love and affection. I am very pleased and obliged to you, and I promise that after this life you will go back to my eternal abode. Vasudeva, I know that you are very concerned for Me and afraid of Kamsa, therefore, I order you to take me immediately to Gokula and replace me with the daughter that has been born to Yasoda.

(Visnu disappears. Vasudeva's shackles fall off. Vasudeva picks up his newborn son and walks past the sleeping guard.)

Scene Four - Kamsa's Prison

(A baby's cries are heard. Kamsa enters the prison cell.)

Devaki: Oh, my dear brother. Don't kill this girl child! You are not to be killed by a girl child. That was the omen; you were to be killed by a male child! Oh, please don't kill her. You have killed so many of my children who were just born. It is not your fault; you were advised by your demoniac friends to kill my children, but I beg you to excuse this girl. She will be your daughter-in-law!

(Kamsa seizes the baby and attempts to smash her head against the floor but she slips from his grasp and disappears into the sky.

Voice: Kamsa, you rascal, don't be so cruel to your sister! How can you kill Me? I am Yogamaya. But, the One Who will kill you is already born before Me, somewhere within this world.

Kamsa: (fearful) My dear sister, my dear brother-in-law (releasing their shackles) I have acted like a demon. By killing your children, I have forfeited all consideration of our relationship. I have condemned myself to the lowest region of hell! Yet, I am amazed that the celestial prophesy did not come true! It seems that even the demigods can speak lies.

But please, you are both great souls - you know that the imperishable soul cannot be destroyed. I have killed their bodies but their spirit souls remain. Oh, my dear sister, you are so gentle, so kind - please don't blame me for the deaths of your children. I was merely

acting out a predestined plan. You are both great-hearted souls, you understand this, and I am so poor-hearted. Take compassion on me; forgive me!

(He cries at their feet.)

Devaki: I forgive you, Kamsa. Be of good cheer.

Vasudeva: We forgive you, Kamsa. What you say is true. And you are fortunate indeed to have possession of such knowledge. Be at peace; we have nothing against you.

(They leave.)

Narrator: And so the child, Krsna, was raised as the son of Nanda Maharaj and Mother Yasoda in Vrndavana. Kamsa discovered His whereabouts and, influenced by his demonic councilors, leveled many plots on the Lord's life. Krsna and Balarama dispatched the agents of Kamsa with child-like grace and ease, until many years had passed, and now they were young men. Kamsa invited them to come to his capital city of Mathura to participate in a festival but it was actually a series of traps meant to kill Them. Krsna and Balarama readily agreed to come to Mathura.

On the day of the Festival, Kamsa observed many bad omens.

Scene Five - Kamsa's Palace

Kamsa: (in his sleep) Aaaaaaaaaaaa!! Poison!! Aaaaahhh!! No! Help!! Murder!! No □ keep away!! Don't touch me!! Oh, no!! It's Him! The death of me is here!! (screams) KRSNA! (wakes up) Krsna! Krsna! Krsna! I can't get Him out of my head for a moment! (looks in mirror) Aaaah!! My head! Where is my head! I can't see my head! Is this an omen?? A premonition of my death? Is Krsna going to cut off my head? Oh! □ I can't see my shadow! Does this mean that Krsna will cut my body into pieces with his weapons!?? I must have a plan. I must make royal preparations for this Krsna! I must rid myself of this troublesome Youth! The elephant! Tomorrow, the fierce elephant "Kuvalyapida" will crush Him! Both of Them! Balarama as well! And if not □ then the wrestlers will finish Them. Yes, the wrestlers will mangle Their bodies! Canura and Mustika are the best wrestlers in the land! They □ they □ what's this??! His weapons? No! I must prevent this! I must defy this Youth! This Boy! This Krsna!

Servant: (entering) I have some news about Krsna, Sire.

Kamsa: Ah... What? Good news? Tell me, has Krsna been killed yet?

Servant: Um, I'm afraid not, Sire. Ah, after the giant bow in the sacrificial arena was broken by Krsna, He killed all your soldiers that you sent to kill Him, and...

Kamsa: No, no, it's not true!

Servant: And when your washerman refused to give Krsna some of your dyed cloth, Krsna also killed him.

Kamsa: No. No! Get out of here, get out! I don't want to hear any more!

Servant: Yes, Sire.

Kamsa: I must start making my arrangements now. Today is my day, my last day to kill Krsna. Servant! Servant!

Servant: Yes, Sire?

Kamsa: Servant, awaken the wrestlers, Canura and Mustika, and tell them to start preparing for the wrestling match.

Servant: Yes, Sire.

(Kamsa exits)

Scene Six - The Wrestling Arena

(Kamsa is seated on a raised platform. The crowd is festive.and everyone is shouting: "Jai Krsna and Balarama!" Krsna and Balarama enter the arena.)

Kamsa: What is all that commotion over there?

Servant: Your nephews, Krsna and Balarama, are entering the arena.

Kamsa: How did they get away from my fierce killer elephant?

Servant: It was most amazing how He killed the elephant. The elephant came before Krsna like death personified, being provoked by its caretaker. The elephant suddenly rushed at Krsna

and tried to catch him with its trunk, but Krsna moved behind the elephant, pulled its tail and dragged it for twenty-five yards. Krsna gave the elephant a strong slap and tripped it, making the elephant very angry. The elephant ran madly toward Krsna, but Krsna grabbed its trunk and pulled it down, jumped up and broke its back! Krsna killed the caretaker also.

Kamsa: Oh, this is terrible news! (Krsna and Balarama enter)

1st Woman: Jaya Krsna, Lifter of Govardhan Hill!

2nd Woman: Welcome Krsna and Balarama, Delight of the damsels of Vraja!

Canura: My dear Krsna and Balarama, welcome to Mathura! The tales of Your mighty deeds have come before You. Our good king, Kamsa, has honored You with an invitation to participate in the wrestling contest.

Kamsa: Indeed, it is a great honor he bestows upon us. And, as subjects of the king of Bhoja, we try to please him as far as possible. But, the truth is that we are merely boys. We sometimes play in the forests of Vrindavana with Our friends who are Our own age but

Mustika: We have heard that, but we have also heard of the wondrous feats You have performed. You are reputed to be great heroes!

Balarama: Such an unequal contest - grown men against young Boys! Do you think that the citizens will delight to see wrestling between such unmatched opponents?

Kamsa: It goes against the principles of religion.

Canura: Nonsense! We are aware that You are not a child or a grown man. You are transcendental to everyone, as is Your Brother, Balarama. You have already killed the elephant Kuvalyapida, who could defeat many warriors, Therefore, by the strength and skill that You have already exhibited here, it is fitting that you compete with the best wrestlers among us. That is why I, Canura, have chosen to wrestle You while Mustika here will wrestle with Balarama.
(Krsna and Balarama accept the challenge. They prepare and take their place.

The wrestlers turn to Kamsa, who signals the match to begin.)

Kamsa: Let the games begin!
(The wrestlers approach and circle one another. They come to grips - hand to hand. Arm to arm, leg to leg, chest to chest. They throw each other about.)

1st Spectator: Dear friends, there is danger here! Even in front of the King, this wrestling is going on between incompatible sides!

2nd Spectator: Mustika and Canura are just like thunderbolts and as strong as great mountains but Krsna and Balarama are two delicate boys of tender age. The principle of justice has already left this assembly. Persons who are aware of the civilized principles of justice will not remain to watch this unfair match. They are unenlightened, therefore whether they speak or remain silent, they are being subjected to the reactions of material life!

3rd Spectator: But my dear friends, just look at the beautiful face of Krsna! There are drops of persperation on His face from chasing His opponent and His face appears like the lotus flower. And do you see how the face of Lord Balarama has turned especially beautiful? There is a reddish hue on His white face because He is engaged in a strong wrestling match with Mustika.
(The fight continues and Krsna and Balarama are eventually victorious. Everyone cheers. More wrestlers come to challenge Krsna and Balarama.)

Kuta: I will not be so soft on you Krsna! I am Kuta. Now you must wrestle with me! (Kuta is killed.)

Sala: I am Sala! I will kill you, Balarama!
(Sala is easily killed. There is the sound of drums, cheers, flower petals fall from above. Kamsa is very angry.)

Kamsa: Stop this drumming! Stop this cheering! I order you to stop! Furthermore, I order that these two sons of Vasudeva be immediately driven out of Mathura! The cowherd boys who have come with them should be plundered and all their riches taken away! Nanda Maharaja should be arrested and killed for his cunning behavior, and the rascal Vasudeva should also be killed without delay! Also, my father, Ugrasena, who has always supported my enemies against my will, should be killed! Seize them all, seize them and kill them! Arrest them! Arrest them and

kill them!

(Krsna jumps on the elevated seat, Kamsa draws his sword, but Krsna knocks his crown off. Then Krsna drags Kamsa off the elevated seat and down to the ground, and straddles him. Krsna strikes Kamsa over and over and over again, then He drags the dead body about. Balarama leads Ugrasena on and places the fallen crown on Ugrasena's head)

Balarama: Now my grandfather, Ugrasena, will assume his rightful position as the King of the Bhoja dynasty. All the citizens should be pleased to serve him. Protected by Krsna, he will be honored even by the demigods from the heavenly planets. Out of fear of Kamsa, the kings of the world were anxious and disturbed. Now they can live peacefully in Krsna Consciousness. (kirtan)